



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, 1st District

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WALKER WRITES A BAD CHECK TO TAXPAYERS

Taxpayers left with empty rhetoric and reduced services

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb released the following statement in response to today's State of the County address:

"No longer content to simply pretend that he has frozen the tax levy, when it has actually increased by nearly \$45 million during his tenure, County Executive Walker upped the ante during his State of the County address Tuesday by making an arbitrary and irresponsible bet when he promised to lower the tax levy next year. This may say more about his perception of his political prospects than his management ability. Given the state takeovers and service deterioration that Milwaukee County has experienced, it's clear that the County Executive's managerial track record is lackluster.

"There is no need to propose a responsible budget if you plan to skip town for a new job. The impending fallout will not manifest until later when taxpayers suffer the increasing consequences of service cuts, deferred maintenance and broken promises.

"Walker's \$200,000,000 check to taxpayers, an insincere metaphor about savings, is really an example of "Enron-like accounting" since it is based on paper gains not yet realized but projected forward and multiplied for effect. When this check bounces, the rhetoric will fall flat.

"Cutting hundreds of jobs and doubling furloughs for deputies as the County Executive has done erodes service quality and makes our community less safe. These are not characteristics of leadership; they are policies of long-term decline. The comparison in business is a CEO who manages based on the next quarter's performance and personal opportunity to benefit while undermining the company's long-term fundamentals. Far from being actual fixes, these are short-term maneuvers that bear no relation to the real demand for county services.

"Despite the six-month track record, Walker misleads the public again when he claims success on the use of pension obligation bonds. This \$400 million "borrow-and-invest" scheme is far more complex and risky than his comparison to refinancing a home. It is a high stakes bet based on

arbitrage. Further, short-term performance during a market surge is no indication of long-term performance.

“Finally, the County Executive forgot to credit President Barack Obama and Congress for providing the financial stimulus, which is the basis of his Milwaukee County Works program. Walker’s plan to borrow very aggressively in 2010 and utilize more than \$40 million of one-time federal stimulus funds is an exceptional turnaround from his stance less than one year ago.

“It is good to hear the County Executive singing positively about Milwaukee County, but citizens must look beyond the rhetoric to see the peril of short-term promises. Simply put, it must be an election year.”

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